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ABSTRACT

This is a mid-project report which describes the accomplishments of the Local School Development Project of the New York Urban Coalition, a group which collaborated with the New York City school system through Spring, 1981. The report reviews the Project's efforts to aid in students' academic, intellectual and human development in elementary and junior high schools in five New York City community school districts. Project officials, district superintendents, and school principals comment on Project activities and planning processes. Project activities such as morale remediation, parent involvement, staff inservice education, curriculum improvement, and instruction enhancement are outlined. In addition, tables show improved reading scores for students in the five districts, and remarks by teachers and parents indicate increased student motivation. (Author/APM)

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Making
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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

This mid-project report describes accomplishments of the Local School Development Project of the New York Urban Coalition with the New York school system through Spring of 1981. It challenges the trend toward giving up the ship of public education, for the performance of Project schools has convinced us that negative messages are not only unhelpful but are misinformed.

In providing more current information about local school development, we offer improved prospects for vitality in urban public schools generally. Specifically, our review celebrates the completion of School Plans throughout the five community school districts where the Project operates.

Collaboration
Our theme is collaboration around a common aim — developing the capacity of school communities to respond accurately and effectively to youngsters' needs.

We do not use the term "collaboration" lightly. It means more than a mere willingness to cooperate; it requires a change of attitude — a commitment to risk cherished assumptions. It means giving up self-interest for the collective good. In comprehensive school planning, it means intending to carry out collective decisions.

The widespread evidence we see of collaboration at all levels of the Project and among civic organizations, universities, and others, signals a fresh spirit — a willingness to formulate and pursue a new mission for public education in the City.

Gloria Weinman, the United Federation of Teachers' representative on the Council on Local School Development, expressed the point this way: "In this period of upheaval in New York City, we have had to put aside many old differences simply because they can no longer be afforded. We are at a different time — different relationships, a different context, different people. The direction for an effective public education system is within our reach and within our very hands."

Amen! The Council itself is evidence of a renewed and informed commitment at all levels to creating conditions for significant growth in local schools. There is a paradox: although this is a time when resources are diminishing, school communities are discovering that they can mobilize their own resources with powerful effects. Indeed, the Local School Development, together with a number of related efforts such as the School Improvement Project at the Board of Education, and the Educational Priorities Panel, reveals that resources are indeed available to help schools citywide to improve themselves.

Themes and achievements
Our report begins with an interview with Education Director, Lynn H. Gray, Jr., who clarifies our themes and explains why we are so optimistic — where the Project has come. For it is now time to talk about accomplishments of the Project.

Who makes development work?
We describe the many partners who have decided to collaborate actively to accomplish common aims. They include the members of the Council itself and extend to the district offices, to groups of principals, and the planning teams — including kids.

What makes development work?
We describe and explain the services and strategies that comprise the Project: training, on-site consultation around comprehensive planning, linking, networking.

How is development working?
This section is the heart of our message: stories and examples of how development has taken place at all levels of the public school system. We emphasize that each school is unique; what works one place may not work elsewhere. We acknowledge that there are obstacles to effective collaboration. One of the most obvious lessons is that sound planning is never ending — and rarely easy.

Throughout our report we list important accomplishments. While we are careful to avoid making excessive claims, we cannot help being pleased with what we see.

This is a report of many different viewpoints — of teachers, principals, parents, others. In addition, we offer the view of a camera: the photographs throughout this report were chosen to convey a vivid message of liveliness in the schools, of

"The direction for an effective public education system is within our reach and within our very hands."

Gloria Weinman

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spirited planning, and of the gratifying diversity and commitment of participants.

Local school development is *people* working together to change the expectations of and for the New York City Public Schools. Philip Strell, principal of P.S. 101 in District 4 (East Harlem) expressed our theme perfectly:

"I'm not alone. I have people who want to help me!"

During the past year, Lynn H. Gray, Jr., Director of Education at the New York Urban Coalition, has explained Local School Development to many people ranging from national observers to individual kids in Project schools. The following interview, which condenses several of these conversations, focuses on how the processes of the Project are leading to exciting results — results that can be "seen, felt, measured."

What is the Local School Development Program of the New York Urban Coalition?
It's the best thinking we could put together over years of intense negotiation and struggle. The Coalition has been wrestling with problems in this city for about twelve years, and this is the capstone effort. Out of all the work we've done since the late sixties, this is what we think is the best way to make schools effective. If it works, we want to see it incorporated broadly in the city.

Who sponsors it?
About twenty organizations that form the Council on Local School Development. They include the teacher's union, the chancellor, parent organizations, civic organizations, private sector groups, and government agencies.

The goal is to...?
To increase the effectiveness of kids' academic, intellectual and human development.

What's the strategy?
The strategy is to enable each of the schools to produce an integrated, comprehensive plan for its full set of activities.

How do you accomplish this?
Through a planning body that represents the entire school community, called a "planning team." It's made up of parents, teachers, administrators, and adults who are active in the community. When we work at the junior high school level, students also participate.

What about the principal?
The planning team is an advisory body to the principal. As building leader, the principal delegates to the team the responsibility to look comprehensively at where the school is, where it ought to be, the resources it has available.

Besides sharing all that responsibility, how does the principal lead?
The principal articulates an instructional philosophy which shapes and drives all teaching activities in the school. The staff can not only state it simply — and discuss its meaning — but applies its intentions to each and every teaching situation.

Like discipline?
Definitely. And students and parents feel invited to participate in the specific strategies.

The Coalition has been wrestling with problems in this city for about twelve years, and this is the capstone effort.

Lynn H. Gray, Jr.

Why does the full school community have to be involved?
Because the local school anchors broader neighborhood stability and development. We ask the full school community to learn to listen to all of its voices—the administration, the parents, the teachers, the support staff, and the children. We ask them to seek to hear each other's ideas and concerns and then sort out a priority agenda, and marshall resources.

How do you get all of this rolling?
It begins with thorough self analysis, built on a detailed assessment of educational needs. Who are we in relationship to these children? What do we want to accomplish with and for them?

The New York City school system of elementary and junior high schools is broken down into 32 decentralized districts, each serving between 10,000 and 30,000 kids. How do you relate to that structure?
The project is in five school districts: #4 in Manhattan, #12 in the Bronx, #13 and #23 in Brooklyn, and #28 in Queens.

We provide one person to each of the districts. The district matches that person with one of its own. So a team of two people coordinates the work with the schools—facilitating, training, linking people, building networks. Beyond that we have a set of resources we provide in program development. We try to expand the schools' access to other city resources.

For instance, in Intermediate School 158 in The South Bronx this past year the percentage of kids on grade level rose from 25 to 42 percent! Now, that's almost *double*.

Lynn H. Gray, Jr.

It's absurd to ask people to pull off pretty unrealistic things every day, but I'm amazed at how resourceful people can be.

Lynn H. Gray, Jr.

How many schools are involved now?
About 35. Thirteen are at the junior high level; the rest are elementary. All schools participate voluntarily. We need full agreement by the parent organization, the union chapters, the administration and the principal to collaborate. Any one group can veto the entire school from participation.

When did the planning teams start?
Between February and May 1980. This spring the first comprehensive school plans are being completed.

Are the members of each school's council elected or appointed?
Elected by their own constituencies. Teams range in size from about twelve up to thirty. Each school decides the best shape of the team. The only guideline is there must be a balance in the political weight of the different constituencies.

Why stop at junior high schools? What about senior highs?
In New York City, the decentralized districts only deal with kids up to the eighth or ninth grades. Since we're working through community school districts, we decided that would be the first focus. I suspect that after another year of trying to get this thing stabilized, the question of high schools will be explored seriously.

It's clear that Local School Development is a special process that's evolved over a decade of work in this city. Now let's talk about concrete results. How will you judge whether this effort makes a difference?
One criterion is that schools ought to perform better on the existing tests the kids take. There ought to be a whole range of other things, too, like remodeling the curriculum. It should respond to kids' real needs; it should connect better to career planning. And it should reflect fuller educational discussions among teachers.

Resulting in what?
Fresh local programs to address what teachers felt were significant problems.

Like discipline and basic skills?
If those are the significant problems, yes. The point is that the school would no longer only react. It becomes a center of action, planning for its own future. The dollars even buy more. The results are more coherent, and children directly benefit.

By these criteria, what sort of success have you seen so far?
The planning teams are in various stages, but reports are saying that the first thing the council is doing is achieving a level of communication and trust. Each school has reflected on where it is as a school community and has identified the glaring problems. They've started to mount serious attacks on those.

What's their biggest concern, typically?
The lack of security in the building—the fear of adults, the fear for the safety of kids. So an awful lot of work is being done on security systems.

More guards?
No, not simply guards or police. Rather, reorganizing the building and opening things up so people talk and share with each other. Now they're moving into the core—the academic program. The whole project is targeted toward significant improvement in learning for kids.

In this city—probably in most cities—people will want to know about solid results. Trust and communication are nice, but—
It should be clear that local school development is about increased effectiveness in local school buildings. It can be seen, felt, and measured.

Do you mean kids will get higher reading scores?
It includes that. But better test performance isn't all. We pay attention to other things essential to the life and growth of a learning community—commitment, caring, things that relate to thinking and valuing.

So have reading scores improved in Project schools or not?
Yes. The reading scores have improved in most of the schools. Apparently scores are rising across the city.

Good. Do you attribute improvements directly to your project?
We can't pinpoint one single cause. But I'll say this: some results in schools where we work are extremely significant. For instance, in Intermediate School 158 in The South Bronx this past year the percentage of kids on grade level rose from 25 to 42 percent! Now, that's almost *double*. No question about it—the school is responsible for that

"We're in a period where we're looking at achievement."

Dr. Thomas Minter

gain. Something important is happening. And we're pleased to be involved.

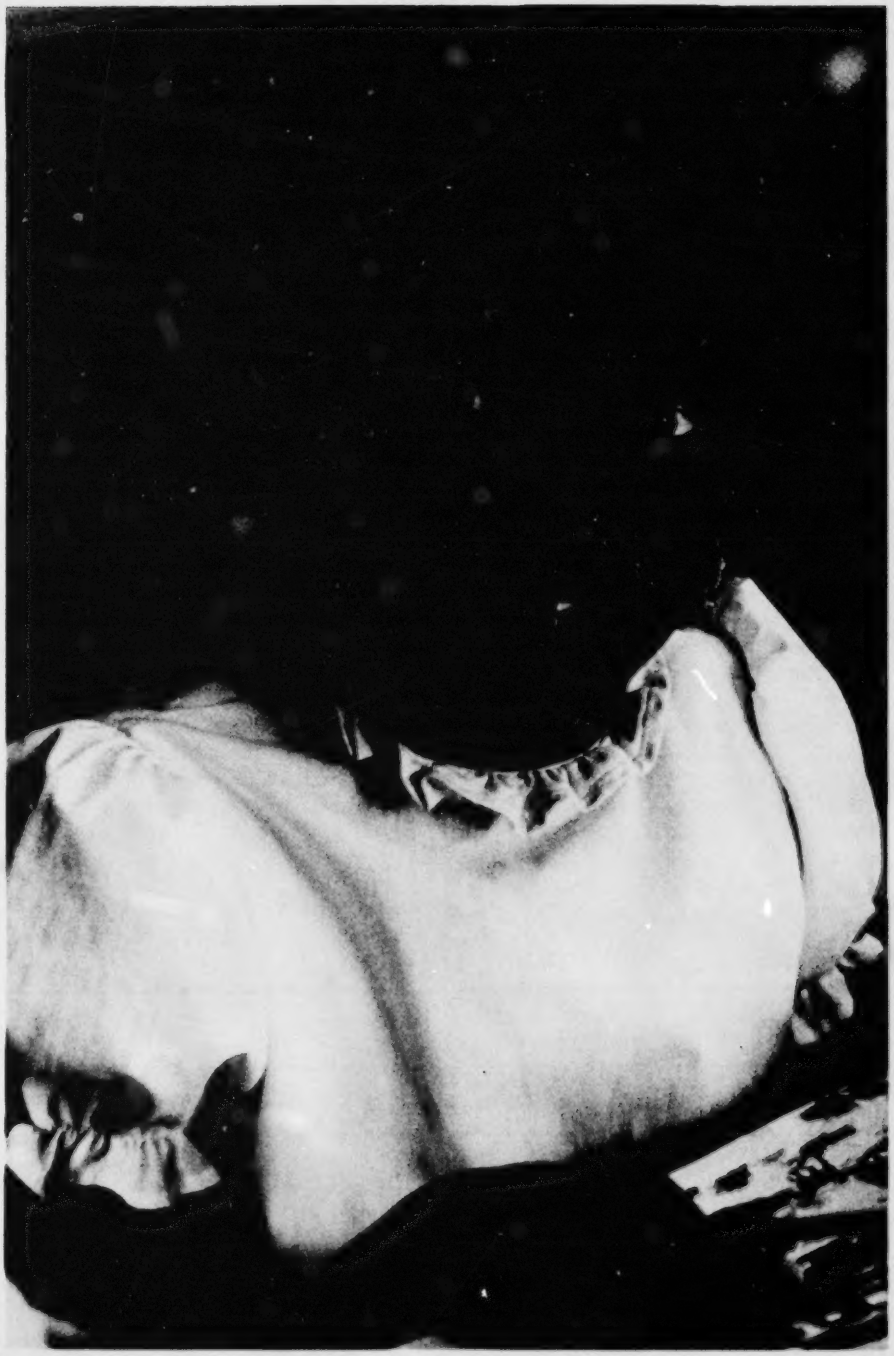
How hard has the job been?
It's complicated to get staff to do all the things we're asking them to do. It's absurd to ask people to pull off pretty unrealistic things every day, but I'm amazed at how resourceful people can be.

What's been the toughest challenge you've had to deal with?
The phenomenal lack of trust. We spent eighteen months trying to negotiate through the political process. Our goal, which we met, was to have this effort collaboratively sponsored by all these groups. It took a long time. There were a lot of struggles.

What about struggles in the local schools themselves?
The single most difficult task so far has been giving enough support to the parent constituency so that they are really active. It's a hard task because there are job demands, social demands, that make it hard for the parent to be around the school.

As the first school plans are completed, have you learned anything that might be useful to others?
The level of participation has been amazing. We've also learned that it's really hard to help a school community to look at its own strengths and weaknesses. People need to listen very carefully to each other.

But we've found that it can be done. It can work.



First impressions of Local School Development

Dr. Thomas Minter, Deputy Chancellor for Instruction, New York City Public Schools, had taken office only a couple of weeks before visiting a Project school—Intermediate School 158 in District 12, Bronx:

"It seemed to me that the project had brought the whole school together, and the principal gave the project the credit. Everyone came together—teachers, guidance counselors, parents, paraprofessionals, pupils, the district special education unit, reading specialist—and they all had very laudatory things to say about each other and about the school..."

"We're in a period where we're looking at achievement. We have to find out in a project such as this, where there is consensus, whether or not that achievement actually does happen, and how long it takes..."

"First, you have to change the climate of the school. The teaching of basic skills is then supported by the school environment, and that results in higher achievement. The questions are, how long does it take to put the package together, and what are the stages? The final stage should be visible, quantitative improvements in achievement."

The central idea behind Local School Development is that the most important part of schooling occurs in the interaction between teachers and children, and that the whole school community must focus on ways to improve the quality of that contact.

This means that collaboration must occur at all levels that affect the local school. Partnerships must be formed among all the groups and organizations and individuals who directly or indirectly influence the school.

One tradition that has changed in light of Local School Development is the notion of a rigid hierarchy of power. Here is what selected people at every level of that traditional hierarchy have been saying about local school based planning:

The Council on Local School Development

This body governs the project. It is composed of representatives from major groups and constituencies concerned with improving the quality of local schools city-wide, including the United Federation of Teachers, civic organizations, and Board of Education officials. The Council makes decisions by consensus, a method which the Coalition tested for more than a year as it selected school districts and project personnel, developed its budget, and established operating policy.

As the project began, the Board of Education, represented on the Council by Mr. Ronald Edmonds, then special assistant to the Chancellor, articulated a philosophy of instruction underlying the mission of the public education system:

"The philosophy publicly disseminates two major premises: *one,* all children are educable, and *two,* the degree to which their educability is realized is primarily determined by the characteristics of the school to which they go."

"The school is powerful to deliver basic instruction to children. Regardless of how the family behaves, it is incumbent on the school as an institution to get the basic job done." (Presentation to the Atlanta Public Schools with Project superintendents, April, 1980.)

Superintendents

The five District superintendents in the project also form a partnership. Although each pursues a specific Community School District mission, by participating in the Project each supports a process that will strengthen and extend District educational policy.

Dr. Arnold Raisner, superintendent of District 28, (Queens), and President of the Association of Superintendents, has repeatedly emphasized the importance of local decision making for schools. In his view, the purpose of the Community School District Office is to encourage and support effective decisions on the local school level.

"We know enough right now to educate every child in this city. That is not debatable."

Dr. Peter Negroni

"In these days of budget cuts, most superintendents say, I don't need anyone to help me—I just need more money. Well, we had more money, and we did no better. Local School Development says, 'Identify your problems and solve them with what you have'."

Dr. Peter Negroni

The malaise that the public hears about education in this country, he says, can be traced partly to the constraints on local initiatives, often in the forms of "solutions" imposed from above—whether Federal mandates or central office requirements or others.

"There is no one way that works—no panacea for solving the problems in the schools. Problems differ from school to school, and what works one place may not work somewhere else. There are many, many variables involved: style of the principal, teachers' attitudes, materials. There is no solution that can effectively be imposed."

On the district level, leadership must aim to emancipate the energy latent in the school community by breaking through constraints. There are all kinds of constraints. Systematic, financial, contractual, organizational, legal, attitudinal, programmatic. These can lead to frustration, the feeling that nothing can be done.

School based planning is based on the ideal that teachers, principals, staff are indeed competent—but their capacity must be supported and released through communication.

"The Project enables people to communicate across those conventional boundaries around common aims. So it's a vehicle to release this pent-up energy, to channel stress and frustration into self renewal."

Sometimes the Coalition has built a strategy of comprehensive school planning upon a history of Urban Coalition involvement in the school district. *Dr. Peter Negroni*, for instance, superintendent of District 12 (Bronx), had been promoting comprehensive school planning before the Project began. The effort therefore extends and refines the base which he established.

The following are a few of Dr. Negroni's observations:

"What's important is to examine all of the things you do, ask what you do and why, based on a thoughtful process. Reflection is a key. Staff development is a process of reflecting on why the staff does what it does."

"We know enough right now to educate every child in this city. That is not debatable."

"It's difficult to say what's attributable to this Project. It's generated a tremendous amount of interest on the part of these schools to succeed. They serve as a spark to other schools, and you can capitalize on that."

Dr. J. Jerome Harris, superintendent of Community School District 13 in Brooklyn, has emphasized how Local School Development contrasts with the historic turbulence in New York Public Schools:

"The Project truly proves the point that collaboration is better than confrontation."

Because every school is unique, the Project "is different in different schools."

Yet just as each project school must plan according to its distinctive qualities and needs, each school *district* is different and reflects the distinctive philosophy of the superintendent and the Community School Board.

In District 13, Dr. Harris has emphasized Curriculum Learning Objectives—a set of aims that have been adopted by the School Board as official policy. Although the objectives present a firm and organized approach to teaching, they are flexible.

According to Dr. Harris, the Project operates comfortably within the structure because it has enabled participants to make the most of opportunities for flexible and creative instruction. Particularly, the Project has opened lines for communication and "has brought staff and principals' professional and personal development to a level which has not come from the District office."

Chairpersons of School Planning Teams

The two most important people in the Local School Planning process are the principal and the chairperson of the planning team. Both receive training on how to foster collaboration and run effective meetings.

Barbara Miles and Anita Hines are co-chairpersons of the P.S. 30 (Queens) Planning Team. Ms. Miles, who is licensed to be a principal has just ended a meeting. The room is full; about 25 people are present.

"I think a support system is really key. Teaching can be a lonely job—almost as lonely as being superintendent."

Dr. Peter Negroni

"Our role is to keep meetings productive. We have parents, a school secretary, the principal, custodian, dietitian, teachers. One parent is a teacher at another school. One parent even left work early to attend our meeting..."

"When people talk about process, they're able to do it fluently. But when they begin to *implement* that process—this is when anxiety and resistance enter in. So you often have to back-track until they feel comfortable. And then they can move ahead. They have to stop, go back, solidify, identify, explain, and move forward, even with a little bit of kicking. This is the first time we've really investigated our program—as a group."

Stuart Kellerman,
Chairperson of the I.S. 158 (Bronx) Planning Team.
"My main concern has been to keep the team excited, motivated and moving upward. I was pleased with the successes with what we've done in curriculum. There is no question that children in special education have a better sense of themselves as students. They're part of the school, not separate. You don't hear kids say, 'he's a retard, he's crazy.' These kids are accepted now."

"When I became the chairperson, I thought, I don't want to commit if I can't succeed. Let's not waste our time. Let's do something. And we have!"

Karen Schwartz, who is chairperson of the P.S. 67 (Brooklyn) planning team, agrees that the first task is to learn how to work as a group, then to assess needs.

"The aim was to mobilize all the talents of the school community—from the teachers, to the parents, the principal, the paraprofessionals, the kids. Hopefully we would become a cohesive group."

"We began with training sessions, and I learned how to run meetings. Then we did a needs assessment. We presented to the entire staff, including lunch workers and custodians, and to the parents. Basically people were all in agreement. Discipline and school tone were priorities. Lunchroom was a big problem. And injuries on the playground, especially at recess. Hall traffic and intruders were problems."

"We've solved those problems. For instance, we installed a system of color-coded passes to deal with hall traffic. As you can see, it's pretty peaceful here. I can even teach with my door open!"

"We've gotten parents involved, which has never happened here. We held parents' open house—very informal. From that social gathering we told them we wanted them to join us—and there was a positive feeling."

"Now we're dealing with academics. This coming year we are going to try a new way to use (ESEA) Title I funds—for prevention instead of remediation. We'll see."

Principals
Ursula Day, principal of P.S. 30 (Queens) and a participant on the planning team that Barbara Miles and Anita Hines co-chair, offers this perspective of leadership, which captures the spirit of the Project:

"One person, the principal, doesn't have to be on top, mandating things, handing down rules and regulations, with people not having any commitment to it, just doing it because they'd rather work that way. I've had teachers come to me upset because they thought I didn't understand that I was giving up power. They thought that this was very dangerous to me as a person and to my position. Wasn't I afraid that eventually I wouldn't be principal?" (She laughs.)

"I guess I assured them I feel secure in my own position because I am committed to this type of democratic leadership. I feel that several people could do better than I in trying to think of all the ideas for the school. It's a slow process, but when we tried to move rapidly to a product, that backfired. The teachers got up in arms when they felt the team was trying to dictate to them. So we had to go back and build commitment again."

Philip Cox, principal of J.H.S. 265, (Fort Greene, Brooklyn) explains why he prefers shared leadership around planning, even when there is potential conflict about authority:
"I don't really feel that there is any conflict between what the planning team might decide to do and what I want to do. If I want to develop a reading program a certain way, and the planning team comes up with a different way, nine times out of ten I will support their plan if it is logical and well-thought-out."

"One time they were talking about beautifying the building. Got the custodian involved. The kids got involved. Just walk around this building. It's clean. There are flowers outside. We're going to do a paint job next. And we're changing the lighting in the school..."

Philip Cox

"I have found that I'll get a better program if I go with a plan that the staff and parents have helped design and will support, than if I try to force my own plan upon them."

What about the genuine reluctance of many principals to share that kind of power? In response, Mr. Cox reads a statement of the planning committee:

"The key to success is that all are working together with the same goal in view."

What are some of the results of that broad-based partnership?

"The most important thing is that people are beginning to think in terms of plans, strategies to solve problems. It's not coming from the principal. They're meeting together, discussing problems, and I'm part of those meetings. I don't mind taking the risk."

Parents and Kids

In schools throughout the five districts where the Local School Development Project operates, staff and administrators have been surprised and gratified by the participation of parents in comprehensive planning. Sometimes the effort has been difficult, for today's parents are usually working during the day. In Ocean Hill, success has come from an unusual source—the youngsters in the school.

"I found them talking about things concerning *school* lately instead of this boy and that boy, and of what's happening here and there. They'll discuss what they're going to bring up at the next meeting."

Harriet Jenkins

Harriet Jenkins, a parent in Intermediate School 55 (Ocean Hill, Brooklyn), explains:

"The main goal in this school has been to get the kids more involved. And it's a really big improvement...

"*Kids* get the parents to go to meetings. *Kids* are leading workshops in the evenings. You start with a little entertainment, and then you break up into small work groups. It seems to be working... It makes them feel a part of what's going on."

The result has been a profound change in the school climate.

"It feels different." Mrs. Jenkins pauses. "You'd have to be here to know what I mean—you'd just had to have been here last year."

Then Mrs. Jenkins decides to explain the change in another way:

"A lot of the kids come from the project over there where I live. In the building the kids will be meeting together, talking about activities for the next day. And you know, I found them talking about things concerning *school* lately instead of this boy and that boy, and of what's happening here and there. They'll discuss what they're going to bring up at the next meeting. Things like that."

"Before, they'd go outside and jump rope, play handball, or whatever. And now, I find them sitting at the kitchen table talking about what happened at the meeting."

"What works one place may not work elsewhere," Dr. Arnold Raisner observed. Each school is unique; each faces different obstacles and opportunities for growth. This is why each school must conduct its own needs assessment, work out its own approaches to solving problems.

Andrew Henderson again:

"Any process needs to be flexible, depending on the context. Some schools don't think it's necessary to put a lot of time into training to improve relationships because they feel that's not their problem. They might want to look at instruction or curriculum, or some other kind of thing to get them closer to objectives."

Our review of accomplishments is not a scientific survey and analysis. That is being conducted by the Documentation Unit of the New York City Board of Education, which reports regularly on the Project and the Board's School Improvement Project. However, the following examples of growth in Local School Development offer insights into diverse ways that development occurs.

Mainstreaming, talent, and achievement
Intermediate School 158, District 12 (Bronx)
Dr. Charles Dunn, principal

The typical visitor to I.S. 158 is apt to remark, "I can't get over how *clean* this place is!"

In startling contrast to the devastation in the South Bronx neighborhood that surrounds it, I.S. 158 is so clean inside that the hallways gleam like new hospital corridors. The toilets are spotless. The visitor wonders, how come? Do the security guards and teachers spend their time monitoring graffiti?

"We don't. The kids do it," said Stuart Kellerman, the chairperson of the planning team. "If some writing appears on the walls, there's an underground kid's network that finds the culprit right away—thirty minutes—and the graffiti disappears. Kids are very perceptive. They know that we think it's important because it's important for the kids. Not just for us. For them."

The school is equally proud of something that easily escapes all but the most perceptive visitor:

"Our special education kids are mainstreamed into the regular classes," Kellerman explained. "Go into any mixed class and you'll have a hard time spotting the special ed kids." The mainstreaming program grew out of school-wide planning. One additional benefit of that effort has been that average class size has dropped.

Special ed kids are also integrated in a drama class, part of the schoolwide talent program, which also grew out of planning. One Spring day, the students were rehearsing a scene from *The Devil and Daniel Webster:*

"You were men once. Have you forgotten...?"

"Good!" called the drama teacher, who usually teaches English. "But more energy. Remember, you're desperate. Come on—more intense!"

Moments later, another speech: "There is failure and despair on the endless journey of mankind," a tall girl read. "There is sadness in being a man, but it is a *proud* thing, too."

One cannot help feeling the truth of these words while staring out the window at burned, vacant shells of buildings stretching for countless blocks.

The Talent program was the faculty's response to the budget cuts. When "extras" such as the arts were eliminated from the regular program, the planning team asked the faculty, "If you could teach any subject, what would it be?" As a result, teachers are instructing jewelry, stagecraft, music, home economics, typing, graphic arts, and drama. The Talent program is now part of the curriculum for all youngsters.

Principal Charles Dunn points out that "the planning team functions excellently now. I've seen us develop step by step, dealing with severe problems—at first, emergencies like security. We completely revamped our curriculum, emphasizing our goal to make the children feel good about themselves.

"To be honest, we had to examine ourselves. We have a good staff, but we found that we send off signals that we have low expectations."

With a consultant, the entire staff examined the many ways in which—often unwittingly—teachers communicated low expectations for children, for themselves, for the school, and for the community. Using a systematic approach to change specific behaviors, the staff has reversed those patterns. Staff development through workshops or role-playing and other methods has stimulated change and support systems have been created to maintain the change.

For instance, in examining instruction, staff saw the limitations of accepting single-word responses from students rather than challenging them to engage in discussion. Staff development has included training in good questioning techniques. Also, administrators learned that "to give support meant to accept free movement in a class situation when it is academically sound—and to elicit and explain on the *child*'s speaking level."

Kellerman said, "It took a lot of guts for us to look at ourselves. I was worried. But we did it gradually, and we got excellent results. We felt strength as a team. We saw us succeed."

Nevertheless, Kellerman added, the key to team strength in I.S. 158 is the principal, Dr. Dunn. "As chairperson, you have to have commitment, a team that's not afraid. A staff willing to accept change. Now we have changed the curriculum with the school wide reading, math, and talent programs.

Dr. Dunn offered another view:

"I'm a participant, not the leader. Last year we set out four areas of concern. We place each child where he can function, not feel frustrated. We try to integrate instructional approaches."

"I was most concerned about getting the staff involved so that they could challenge themselves. Parents are invited to all staff conferences and workshops. In fact, five parents were in the workshop on expectations, and were very vocal—yet not threatening."

What are Dunn's continuing concerns? "None. I am most pleased. At the school level there's a feeling of cohesion among the team itself. They feel that they are making a contribution. That they have some control over change. They no longer make suggestions to see how I'll react, but now suggest what they really believe in."

One cannot help feeling the truth of these words while staring out the window at burned, vacant shells of buildings stretching for countless blocks.

"I think the Project has made a tremendous change. I wonder if we could have evolved where we are. After years and years—maybe. But without the Project, we couldn't be where we are today."
Stuart Kellerman

"I think I may have written two negative letters—reprimands—this year. Whereas before—maybe five times as many."

Of course, the astonishing increases in standardized tests scores are a topic of pride at the school. But Dr. Dunn views them cautiously:

"Yes, we're very pleased at the improvements in scores. But some things you can't measure with reading scores. We have these kids two years. You try to reverse all of the negative factors at a very crucial age—and all of a sudden the kid's gone."

Mr. Kellerman reflects on the experience of the past two years this way, "I think the Project has made a tremendous change. I wonder if we could have evolved where we are. After years and years—maybe. But without the Project, we couldn't be where we are today."

Consolidation—and one principal's nagging concerns
P.S. 46, District 13 (Brooklyn)
Barry Finkelman, principal

In this school, Local School Development has resulted in a greater awareness among the whole staff, and among parents, of ways to improve the school environment. The school community has directed its attention to curriculum and has begun to establish a curriculum resource room.

The focus of planning this year has been to encourage wider participation. For example, all of the eight committees in the school are now under the Project umbrella, and all chairpersons are also members of the Planning Committee. Components include: pupil personnel, curriculum, finance, a school social committee, publicity, reading, and security.

Mr. Finkelman stressed that this consolidation enables the Project to affect everyone in the school:

"Whether specific teachers are actively involved in planning or not, the Project has its effect. After a time, people will not say, 'oh, that's local school development.' Rather, they will say 'This is the way the school operates'."

Mr. Finkelman has been pleased that teachers are more concerned with improving curriculum.

"A few years ago they probably wouldn't have cared. They're interested in setting up a resource room to get good materials in one place. Who knows—maybe there's another way, a better way. But they're involved."

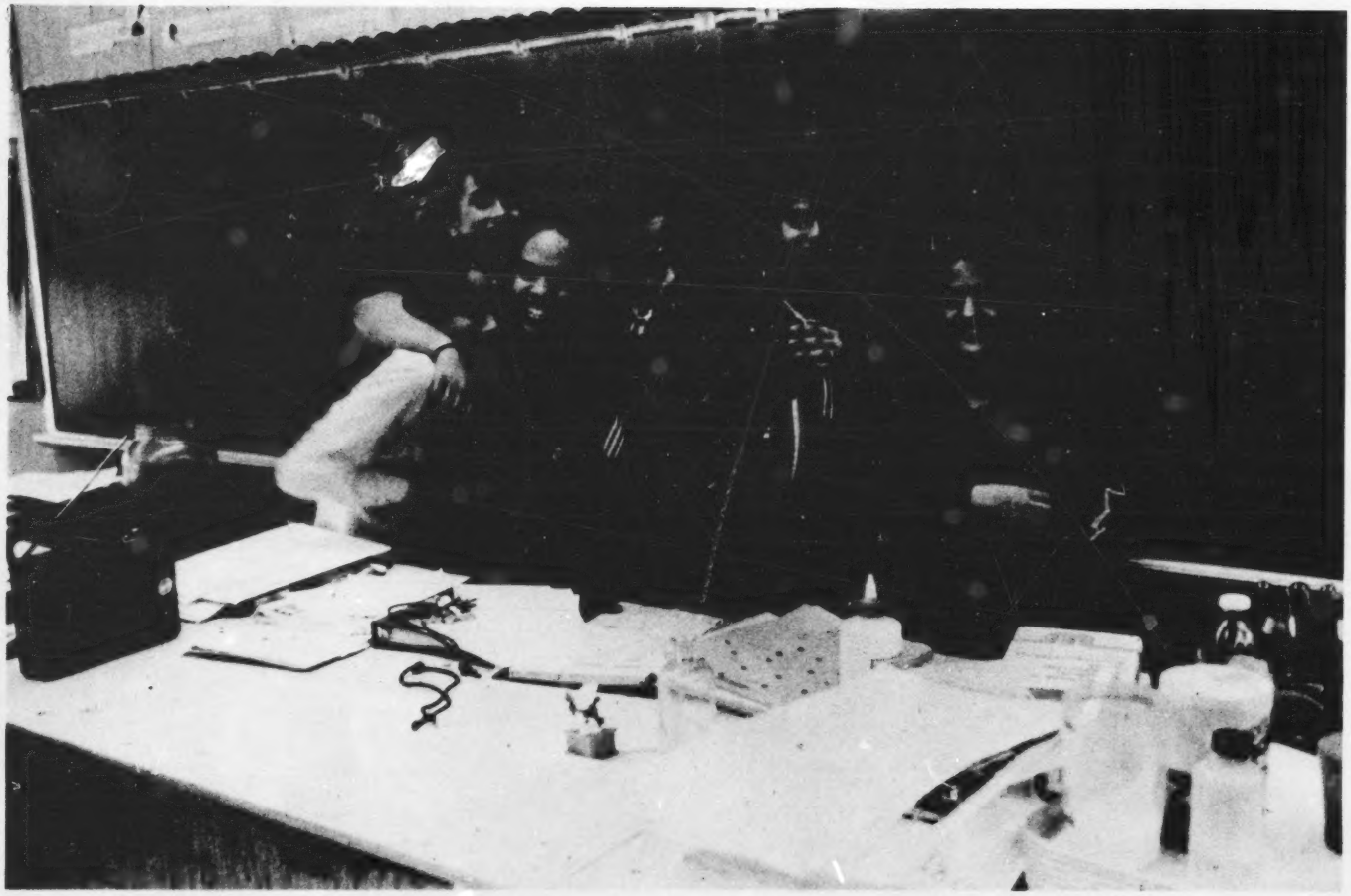
Mr. Finkelman's lingering concern is the future of the effort which has taken hold in this school—at least for the time being. "My problem is whether it can be sustained over the long run. I'm not sure people can afford to wait that extra time, for that's not their primary job. It's the administrator's responsibility. Teachers are doing this planning on their own time. You wait for the hour they can afford to give and if they table a motion, maybe you have to wait three more weeks. People may lose momentum and energy."

He also wonders whether the people involved possess the capacity for genuine comprehensive planning. "There are trained people whose primary job is to do comprehensive planning, who don't know what they're doing. And now we have part-timers doing it!"

He emphasized that the activities in the Project have contributed to the morale at P.S. 46, and that the school had been involved for years with the School Advisory Committee Program of the Urban Coalition. Therefore much of the basic theory was accepted in the school immediately.

"I'm not being overly critical," Mr. Finkelman said. "But I hear about how someone got their team involved in developing an after-school club, which I think is very good and beneficial. But then I hear that this took a year of meetings and efforts—a *year* to get one club off the ground! And this same committee is supposed to deal with a comprehensive plan? Where are they going to get the time?"

"I think I may have written two negative letters—reprimands—this year. Whereas before—maybe five times as many." *Stuart Kellerman*



17.

"I can even teach with my door open!"
Karen Schwartz

Creating "a sense of total uplift."
J.H.S. 265, District 13 (Brooklyn)
Philip Cox, principal

This junior high school has been involved with the Urban Coalition since 1976; the Local School Development Project therefore builds on a tradition of commitment to positive change.

Philip Cox, who has been principal since 1970, has seen many positive changes over a decade.

"When I first came here, it was chaos. After I kept beating my head against the wall I said, hey, some way I've got to get the teachers to participate."

"I have pride. I do not believe I should be in a building if I can't control it. It was tough. It wasn't easy."

"Planning together made the difference. It became a reality once they saw that we were all looking to have a quiet school where we could all be safe. Where youngsters, teachers, where we could *all* discuss a problem and say, 'Hey, this is the problem. What are we going to do about it'."

Ruth Stephens, chairperson of the planning committee, speaks of a "feeling of camaraderie" among the staff. Since the Coalition's involvement "there has been a sense of total uplift. We felt that if we could get ourselves together, we could provide more for the kids. Local school development has "provided us with time to assess needs, make plans. Once we licked the discipline problem, we could tackle academics. Give the kids a feeling of self worth... and a willingness to *want* to achieve."

The school lacked extracurricular activities, so thirty teachers began to volunteer for after school activities—a science club, arts and crafts, photography, gym—without compensation. The school started a band.

Mrs. Stephens believes that every aspect of the school is related. "Improving academics—how do you separate that? It's all related. If we can make the kids feel good about themselves—well, look at the tulips they planted outside. Now, these are little things. But you can't separate them.

"What we have now is that we've learned to have respect for others. And this is what we're all about."

Raising Expectations
P.S. 30, District 28 (Queens),
Ursula Day, principal

"We had a good working relationship before Local School Development. We like each other. But we looked at that relationship in terms of education."

"Two years ago, if you'd told me that I could get ten teachers to give up two hours twice a month I wouldn't have believed it. But everyone on the planning team is staying for planning team meetings and really participating. Really interested. They are committed to change."

Mrs. Day offers a recent example that holds special meaning for her. "The return of the hostages! Everyone was so excited, and I thought, what can we do? I thought about it all night, and I said, maybe we could get the planning team together and I'll cover the classes.

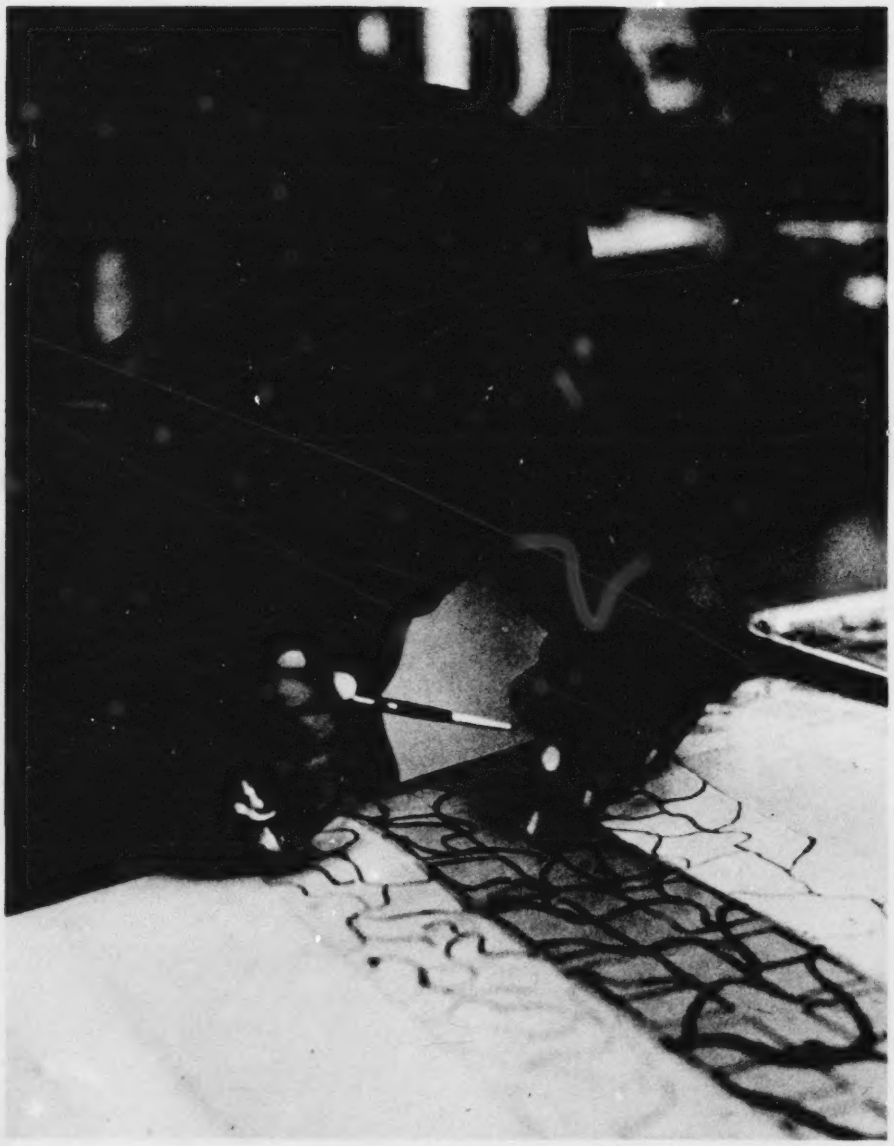
"I was thinking maybe we could have a little parade, or a program in the auditorium. The teachers came together and came up with the most fantastic ideas. We ended up by having a whole week. Each class did something in the auditorium. They worked on writing poems and songs. Then they decided that we would all wear the yellow ribbons and we would all have a parade in the neighborhood—over to Rochdale supermarket—the entire school. And we called the *Daily News*; our picture was in the paper... we had a parade of the entire school.

"Now, I know that two years ago—one year ago—no way could I have enticed the teachers even with my feelings to take a chance on marching the entire school around this whole complex. They would be so afraid that the kids would get wild.

"I think we have raised our aspiration levels for the children in some way by meeting together. Because you see, we've gotten closer. We'd never spent time together before local school development."

"Two years ago, if you'd told me that I could get ten teachers to give up two hours twice a month I wouldn't have believed it." *Ursula Day*

The school lacked extracurricular activities, so thirty teachers began to volunteer for after school activities—a science club, arts and crafts, photography, gym—without compensation. The school started a band.



Students as planners and leaders
I.S. 55 (Ocean Hill) Brooklyn District 23. Dr. Percy Jenkins, principal

Intermediate School 55 is a modern brick fortress—a seemingly invulnerable, almost windowless monolith, one of the few intact buildings in the area. To the local community it is a focus for energy and dialogue and hope.

I.S. 55 places its students at the center of its planning process. It is they who have encouraged widespread parent involvement in workshops and in contributing their own skills to the school program. Dr. Jenkins has developed a tight network of community leaders whose organizations link closely with the school and who regularly attend meetings of the school community.

One of Dr. Jenkins' favorite activities is the "Worry Workshop:"

"Everybody's got something to worry about. In the workshops, we role-play those worries and share possible solutions." Parents, students,and community people all participate in such workshops, often late into the night.

The students have been trained, through the Youth Leadership Program of the Project. They are experts in using sophisticated processes for group meetings and open communication.

"Everybody's got something to worry about. In the workshops, we role-play those worries and share possible solutions."

Dr. Percy Jenkins

In a typical planning session with the principal, students will conduct the meeting, sharing roles and learning through feedback. There are no put-downs; the meeting is orderly and productive as they identify and clarify problems, brainstorm alternative solutions, analyze and set priorities, and reach decisions.

"Parents find it refreshing that kids can articulate their process," Dr. Jenkins said. "The result is that the tension in the school, in Ocean Hill, is lessened. The project has broken down the isolation between teachers, parents, kids. It has reduced fears and made a difference in quality of life."

Lighting his pipe, Dr. Jenkins offered an example:

"You could stop me on the way down to a meeting with the kids and I could be ten minutes late and the kids will be sitting there *waiting*. And that's a fact! They sit there in the seat and *wait* for me to come. They do that! It amazes me everytime!"

Finally, the changed climate of the school has made it possible to focus on educational matters:

"The project provided the outside impetus for planning. I'd never really gotten into any school-wide curriculum revision before. We had been into a lot of short range goals — and are still. And I think that keeps our program vital. But now we have long-range dialogue."

Laying a foundation for a new principal

C.S. 211, District 12 (Bronx).
Miguel Silen, acting interim principal.

C.S. 211 is located in a converted factory in the South Bronx; it is an open space bilingual school. The school has had four principals in five years and a new permanent principal has just been appointed. Miguel Silen, who has taught at the school for 12 years, has been helping the planning team to prepare the way for new leadership.

The team acted as a resource for the staff to take a careful and thorough look at the entire curriculum. This was an especially challenging task for a school committed to bilingual education. As Mr. Silen explained:

"We believe it is important to teach a second language not only to the Hispanic child — English or Spanish dominant — but also to the black child. The staff is committed to doing it correctly."

The chairperson of the planning team, Brenda Carrasquilla, gave some examples:

- schoolwide grouping by ability in reading and math
- area assemblies — on poetry, for example
- testing program that matches the school's — rather than the District's — curricular schedule, designed to reflect individual children's rates of learning.
- a student supply store run by sixth graders.

"The greatest benefit has been improved lines of communication. The staff feels a sense of ownership, and next year's plans came from them. As a result, the new principal's job is going to be a lot easier."

Ms. Carrasquilla adds this thought: "A lot of people say that money can be better spent on district services to children. But I feel that kids are well served this way because unless staff feels ownership in the things that happen to them and the school, they will just go through the motions."

Taking educational risks collectively

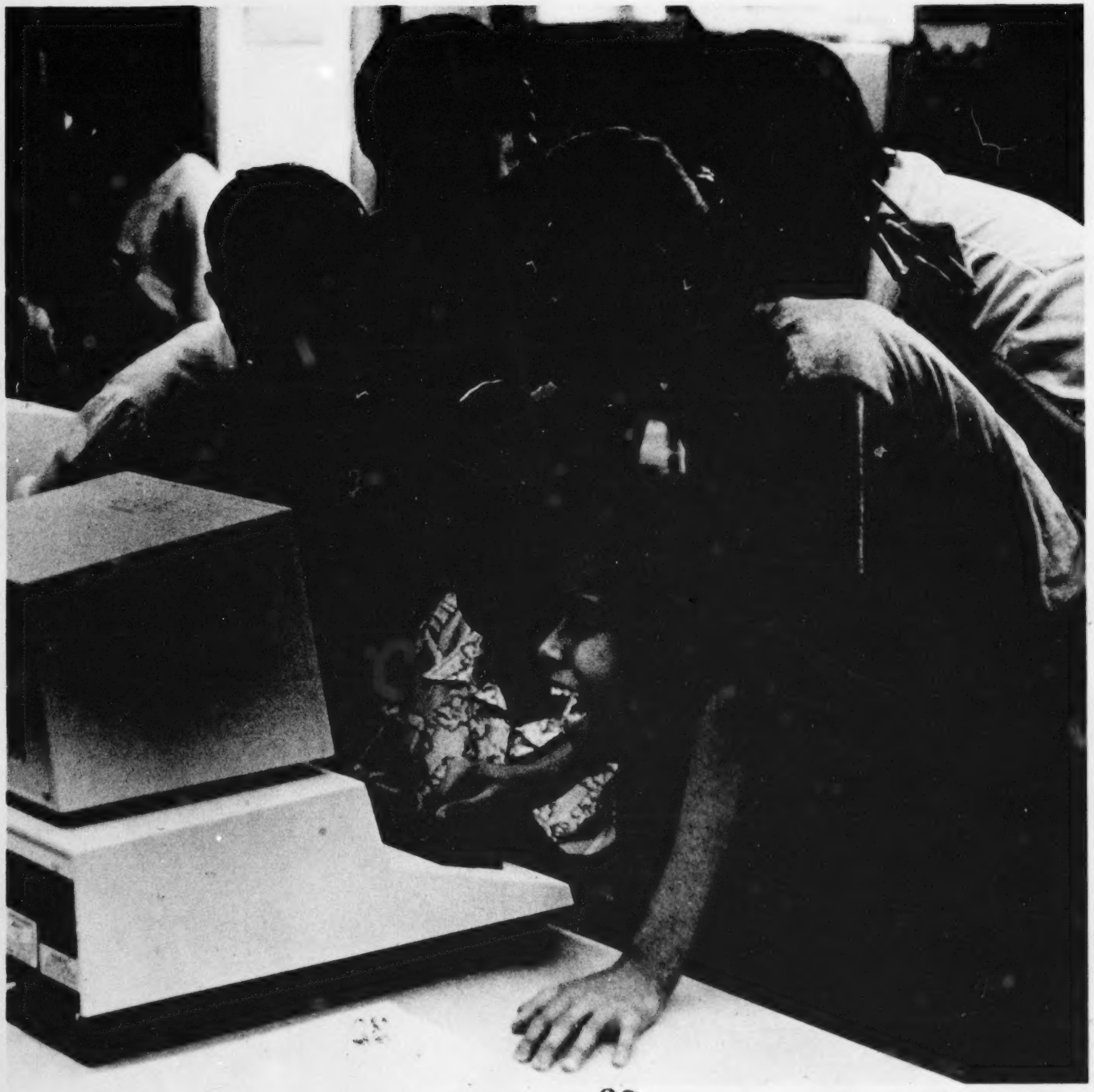
P.S. 67, District 13 (Brooklyn)
David Samuels, principal

There have been several results from the planning process in P.S. 67 over the past year: color-coded hall passes have eliminated hall noise and intruders; children painted and decorated the lunchroom; the principal conducts computer classes for kids and is training teachers in computer programming at lunchtime; the playground was reorganized to reduce chaos and injuries.

Teen Aid, a Board of Education program for pregnant adolescents and pre-adolescents, occupies most of one floor. David Samuels, principal of P.S. 67, explained why young adolescents in the neighborhood may prefer to become pregnant:

"Their existence is bleak; their future seems hopeless. But if they become

The principal conducts computer classes for kids and is training teachers in computer programming at lunchtime.



"Their existence is bleak; their future seems hopeless. But if they become pregnant... everyone moves in—welfare, and so forth. In six years I'm going to get the babies they're making right now—and they'll be the school parents."

David Samuels

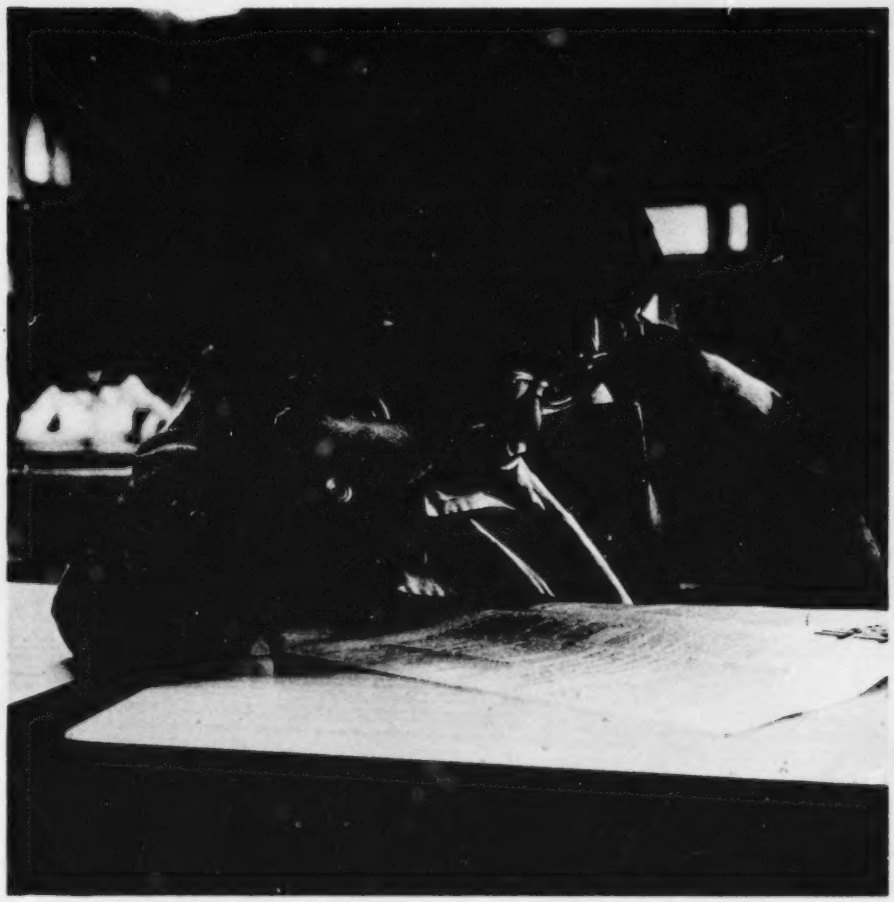
pregnant... everyone moves in—welfare, and so forth. In six years I'm going to get the babies they're making right now—and they'll be the school parents."

One way to interrupt that cycle is through improved academic achievement. However, remediation programs have had limited impact. Instead, Mr. Samuels said, "the emphasis should be upon building a pattern of success at the very earliest levels. This is difficult to do at P.S. 67 because unlike children in many schools, these children enter school with no academic skills whatsoever. We start from scratch."

Unfortunately, extra help cannot be offered through (ESEA) Title I funds—unless a child is 2½ years behind grade level in reading. "A child has to be in third grade at least before that applies—and then it's too late."

In addition to improving the tone and appearance of the school, the school planning team decided to deal with this persistent educational dilemma, which would normally have been the exclusive problem of the principal.

"The Local School Development Project taught us a new way of talking to one another. Now I use consultation, not confrontation. I talk to teachers more. Now we're putting all this to the test." We're proposing to use Title I money to buy another teacher for an all day kindergarten and reduce class size in first grade, and put a reading resource teacher in that classroom for 70 minutes daily. "We ought to be able to prove something.



Politically it's a tough decision, because one teacher's position equals three paraprofessional positions. If someone says, 'are you going to make that decision? How?' I can reply, "No, it's a collective decision.'"

"Failures" become successes
J.H.S. 99, District 4 (Manhattan), Eddie Rodriguez, principal.

J.H.S. 99, located in East Harlem, has just begun local school development. Nevertheless, Principal Rodriguez sees evidence that the process is already yielding positive effects.

For example, the school had been considering participation in a juvenile delinquency prevention project which, if approved, would bring resources and special recognition to the school. Traditionally, the principal would decide whether the school would participate, but Rodriguez decided to share that responsibility with the planning team. After lengthy deliberation, the teachers on the team decided not to endorse the proposed program. Although free to overrule their recommendation, Mr. Rodriguez accepted it.

"At first they were upset. They didn't think I would do that, and thought this meant I'd lose credibility, prestige in the district. People might say the faculty was pushing the principal around. They thought it meant failure. But I told them it's really a sign of success. It shows that I meant it when I said that the opinions of teachers in this school *matter*. And that's reason to take pride."

Mr. Rodriguez emphasizes that the planning process must take the entire surrounding community into account, involving community people when possible. "There's a nice housing complex nearby, and kids like to go over there at lunchtime. It's important for those people to feel comfortable in asking us to educate our kids not to litter, pick flowers, break glass. There's got to be dialogue."

Sometimes catastrophe will result if there is no dialogue.

"We had a gang problem in the area. Two groups decided to meet in battle, and our school was going to get caught in the middle. Who would be able to tell our kids from the gang kids?"

"I met with them. Can't we resolve this some other way? We talked that one out in the park."

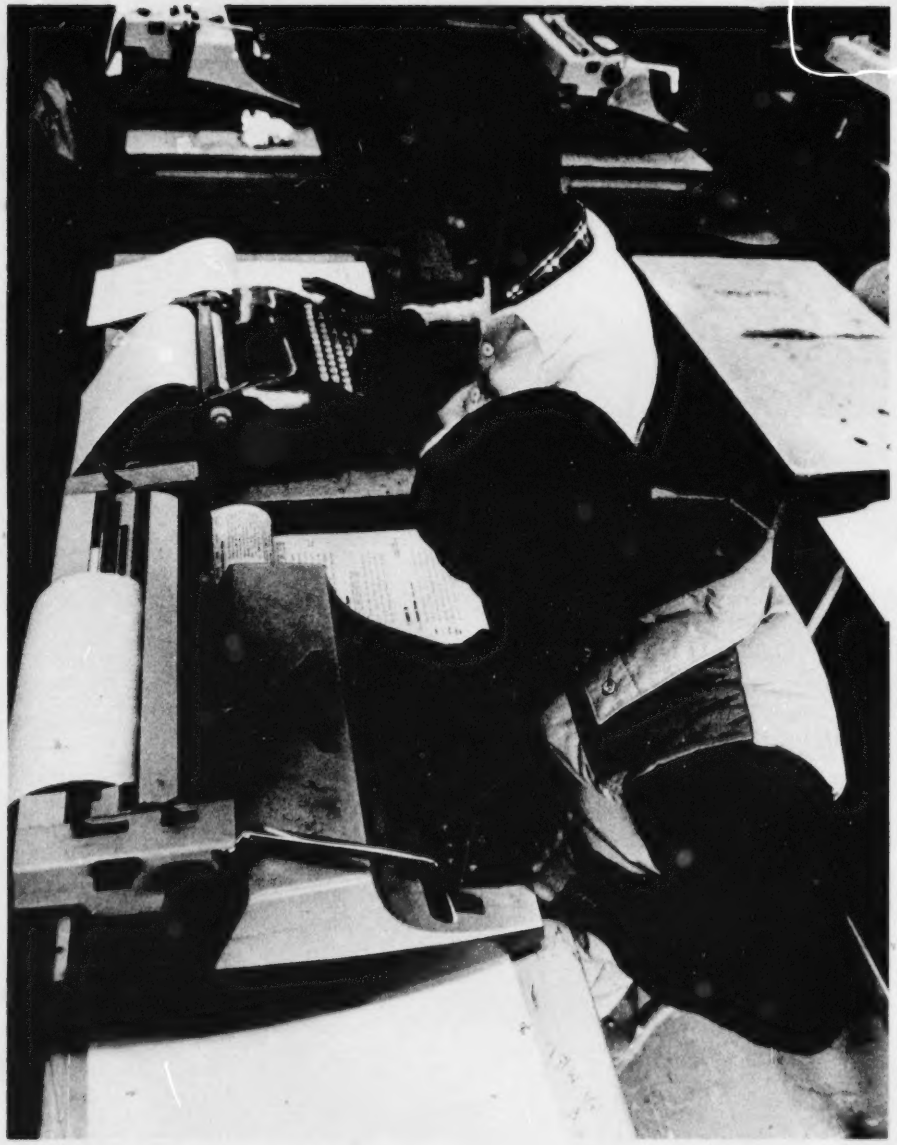
"Another time when gangs were going to settle things in the schoolyard, the argument that persuaded them was this: These are your brothers, your sisters, nephews, cousins at this school. You bring gang business here and hurt them, you're hurting yourselves. And this is a *bilingual* school. Do you want people to say that the only bilingual school in the neighborhood is nothing but trouble?"

Finally, Mr. Rodriguez recalled how one of the most troublesome kids in the school has changed by being involved in planning. A feisty street kid, he seemed almost impossible for the school to handle. To prove his status and influence, he tried to run for student council but failed.

"It was a big blow to him," Rodriguez said. "Then I took a chance and appointed him member-at-large on the planning committee. It was a risk, and people wondered. But this kid went off to a training weekend in the Poconos and when he came back to see me he spoke in a very, very low, soft voice. He said, 'I want to thank you for what you did, Mr. Rodriguez. I never learned so much before about myself.' He kept talking in that soft voice.

"And then he said, 'You notice how my voice is different, Mr. Rodriguez? Well, that's because I've changed. I'm a new person!'"

"And then he said, 'You notice how my voice is different, Mr. Rodriguez? Well, that's because I've changed. I'm a new person!'" *Eddie Rodriguez*



The Project assigns two consultants—one contributed by the school district, one by the Urban Coalition and the Board of Education—to each of the participating school districts to assist schools. Over the past two years these consultants, together with co-managers Ernie Turner and Askia Davis and other Coalition staff have provided a range of services to superintendents, principals, and the parents, students, teachers and other staff working on or with planning teams.

Conferences, workshops, seminars, and on-site advisory services have covered many topics identified by project participants engaged in comprehensive planning. Services have included:

For 38 principals

- Ten workshops on educational leadership, comprehensive planning, and working with planning teams.
- Two working conferences: facilitating change in schools; power, authority, and decision making.
- Thirty-five district seminars (approximately 7 in each of 5 districts) treating day-to-day problems of comprehensive planning. The focus in 1980-81: improving instruction.
- One city-wide seminar on the arts in education.
- One city-wide seminar on planning a curriculum in reading.
- Continuous, on-site advisory services provided by project staff and others (bi-weekly for each principal).

Because the principals are leaders of their schools, the Project has devoted considerable attention to enhancing their capacities for leadership. Workshops, seminars, and on-site assistance from Project consultants have helped build a network of principals with common experiences and insights into school-based planning.

The first year of seminars dealt with theory. While some principals considered those sessions more abstract than practical, most thought that workshops focused their prior training.

Preliminary Project reviews of services to principals show that *75% of planning teams in schools where principals attended most of the workshops were exploring instructional matters.* Only about 30% of the teams where principals had low attendance at workshops were dealing with instructional concerns.

It is difficult to interpret this information confidently. One view is that the workshops provide constant reinforcement for attention to instruction. Yet some principals consider matters of school climate, for instance, essential preliminary steps toward improving instruction. Only in a climate of order, security, and trust can instruction proceed.

Another view is that some principals may be reluctant to share authority and responsibility readily. They may trust a team to work on instruction only after it has proved itself in handling other, less crucial problems.

Still another view suggests that the visible presence of a planning team handling several small-scale, practical, nuts-and-bolts matters builds morale through demonstrable successes. As trust develops through communication and the evidence of a cleaner and more orderly school, channels of informal communication open up. Dialogue around educational issues is gradually made possible.

This view holds that school planning is anything but mechanistic or as formal as it sometimes seems on paper. Its true strength lies in bolstering *informal* dialogue around restoring educational vitality. Formal meetings make explicit the topics that people are discussing in the cafeteria, the faculty room, on the phone, in hallways.

Principals comment on their training

Susan Bailey, C.S. 44 (District 12), Bronx

"This has been fabulous for me! First of all, I like power. And I like to use it in a way that furthers the development of children. I used to run into a great deal of conflict trying to motivate teachers. The Project taught me how to use power effectively."

"I say to people, 'I have a problem. Do you see it as a problem? And what are the causes? What kinds of ideas—suggestions—do you have to help me come to a decision?'"

"I used to go to people and ask them something—but because I felt so strongly I'd issue a mandate... I issued about forty memorandums last year. This year I've only issued *six*. Six memorandums! Why? Because I have groups of people representing all facets of the organization meeting with me on a regular basis. It was a matter of learning how to involve people in a wholesome and effective way. That's one thing I learned."

Becky Smith, Director of Creative Learning Community #171, District 4 Manhattan, revealed how an encounter in a workshop on reading forced an insight that led to immediate action.

"Until I attended the reading workshop I hadn't thought about a reading philosophy. When the presenter asked, 'What is your reading philosophy?' it hit me that I wasn't clear about the school's philosophy."

"I came back all fired up about creating a reading philosophy. I approached my staff and it brought about a curriculum committee."

"This has been fabulous for me! First of all, I like power. And I like to use it in a way that furthers the development of children." *Susan Bailey*

"You can't ask people to plan and do things and then tell them, 'No, it can't happen.' You'll discourage them..."
Philip Cox

Most principals agree that the seminars and workshops offer valuable opportunities to exchange views among peers. *Philip Cox*, principal of J.H.S. 265, said that principals often share problems and ask how their colleagues would handle situations they have experienced. Shared decision making has been an especially provocative topic. Cox's own view is clear:

"You can't ask people to plan and do things and then tell them, 'No, it can't happen.' You'll discourage them..."

What about principals who tried to delegate authority, and were disappointed with the results?

"Other principals said that they opened Pandora's Box and said, 'okay, you do it' and then when the time came, said 'No way are you going to do that!' Well, you can't work that way. You have to be part of that discussion."

Finally, Susan Bailey reflects on the *results* she has witnessed in improved educational programming. She believes that these outcomes grew out of what she has learned in workshops and seminars and from consultants:

"Next year we're instituting a school-wide approach to the teaching of math. That was a new concept, because each teacher had been used to taking a class, teaching the book, giving examples, a quiz—and that was it. We spent the weekend discussing how we will group children by math ability. And *they* came up with the suggestions."

"Now, before this, I would have gone home all summer, tried to map out where kids belonged, come up with some problems. Things would be chaotic to start, and they'd say, 'Oh, that Dr. Bailey—she's such a pain! She's always wanting something, she's always trying to change things, she doesn't know when to leave well enough alone!"

"Now, we did very well in the city-wide reading test and in the math—and they are amazed."

For 36 Planning Teams

- Forty-eight full day workshops treating aspects of comprehensive planning and instructional improvement.
- Thirty-two seminars for on-going training of team members, curriculum development, staff in-service education, and the arts.
- Bi-weekly, on-site advisory services for each team.

For Community Superintendents

- Ten seminars: project review and development; adaptation to particular districts.
- Two two-day working conferences on comprehensive planning and district organization and services supporting school development.
- Four-day site visit: Atlanta public schools.
- Monthly review and planning sessions with project and district staff in each district.

For Parents (members of teams, officers of parents' associations)

- Two city-wide conferences
- Ten district seminars
- On-site consultation

For Students

- Three community conferences with students as trainers of their peers. Topics included: student organizations, classroom performance, and curriculum.

Resources of the Project

Project staff have also assisted schools to gain access to other resources within and around New York City, including:

Education Resources Exchange
CABLES (Community Association of Business, Labor, Education and Services)
Art Supplies Warehouse
Municipal Arts Society
Cities-in-Schools
National School Resource Network
Federal Aviation Administration
Creative Arts Team
VISTA Volunteers
Catholic Charities
116th Street Block Association
Young Audiences
United Parents Associations of New York
Department of Cultural Affairs
WBLS Radio: talk show on Local School Development
Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Project from Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
Crotona Mental Health Program
Architects in Residence
Office of Economic Opportunity
Columbia University
City University of New York
Adelphi University
43rd Precinct

"You could stop me on the way down to a meeting with the kids and I could be ten minutes late and the kids will be sitting there *waiting*. And that's a fact! They sit there in the seat and *wait* for me to come. They do that! It amazes me everytime!" *Dr. Percy Jenkins*

Programs developed by Planning Teams cover a wide area of activities related to school development: morale, remediation, parent involvement, staff inservice education, curriculum. The most essential programs are those which deal directly with instruction. These include:

- Seven school-wide reading and/or math programs.
- Four student writing programs
- Three school-wide student talent programs
- One black studies program
- Two career education programs
- Two gifted and talented programs
- One environmental education project
- One language arts/media project
- Three teacher-training programs: reading and math
- One student curriculum research project
- Four handbooks for students and/or parents
- Three school and/or district newsletters
- Extra-curricular projects in instructional areas (assembly programs and at least six tutoring programs)

These programs are included in the 35 comprehensive plans now being completed by each of the project schools.

"The eight principals that are in the Project have a sense of, 'Hey, I can pull those things together,' whereas before, they'd been so separate."

Dr. Andrew Henderson

Nancy Correa, Project consultant in District 12

"I like to meet people. That's one of the best things the project has to offer. I'm in the background, linking people. For instance, there's a school right across the street that didn't know about resources we have right here in the district office!"

"Creative Scrounging"— Tapping local resources

The Education Resources Exchange, housed in mid-Manhattan at the Academy for Educational Development, is an experiment to link schools with resources throughout the City — resources that often are not available through the Board of Education Division of Curriculum and Instruction. D. Marie Grieco, coordinator of the Exchange, has worked closely with the Project this past year, discovering educational resources ranging from an oven that was crucial to a cooking class, or needles for a sewing class, to a consultant to help an entire faculty reverse negative expectations of students' abilities. For example:

P.S. 332 District 23, (Brooklyn) requested a faculty workshop on using video, photography and radio in the curriculum. The Exchange found a video person from another school, who showed how to use TV in classrooms to teach skills like storytelling and editing.

Rosa Bucrée, a teacher from another school, demonstrated how to use radio creatively. She had devised a popular and successful program called "Schoolwide News," in which children do research and deliver broadcasts to the school each morning.

I.S. 158 needed a consultant to help the staff improve teachers' expectations of students. Marcellus Smith, a consultant, taught techniques of conflict management, working directly with teachers. They had requested help with the following practical topics:

- Ways to make kids feel good about themselves
- Techniques for positive feedback
- How to enable minority kids to feel confident
- How to de-activate potential conflict
- How to re-direct failing students
- How to feel good about themselves as educators.

"The process is meant to enable schools to change themselves. They provide the direction. We provide them the ability to *take* direction."

"We don't come in and tell them to do this, this, and this. Action is the ability of the school to change itself — based on the need to develop."

"Our success depends on our ability to leave — to establish a mechanism for *ongoing* comprehensive planning and evaluation."
Mitchell Levine,
former District 13 Project coordinator

A group of teachers in District 28 expressed interest in seeing how an artist teaches children to create sculpture. The Exchange provided the artist; P.S. 30 provided the setting.

Resource coordinators in each district have begun to hold "resource forums," occasions to share information that may have wide educational application. For instance, in May a forum showed a film called *Made In The Bronx*. The Exchange provided the filmmaker and the program coordinator who was featured in the film, which is about teaching the arts in Bronx communities.

At the same forum, Mr. Eae Mitchell, representing the Concerned Citizens of East 174th Street, described a successful housing project called Mecca. His group had taught tenants and young people how to create and maintain an exemplary environment despite adverse conditions. As a result, principals have asked him to teach his techniques to children in their schools.

Schools have asked what can be done with vacant lots. The Exchange has identified organizations that can help schools and community groups to take action, providing methods of capitalizing on potential educational resources — for example, botany and environmental education.

District Consultants and Coordinators
The Project staff who advise and support principals, chairpersons, teachers, superintendents, parents and youngsters in the five school districts acquire several perspectives during the course of their activities. Some examples:

Lou Butti, District 28 Co-coordinator, discussing the progress of P.S. 30:

"I can't think of two more ideal individuals as chairpersons. We have a teacher who is licensed to be a principal—very articulate, very supportive. And we have as co-chairperson a retired school social worker who's extremely knowledgeable, very articulate, and has a lot of free time. There's such a fluidity there—it's beautiful."

"The teachers see the team as something really non-threatening now and something that can only be positive in the future. So when I feel this way, it's not only myself—whoever has come out of P.S. 30 and observed the team feels it."

Why is change occurring in these schools?

"Before, schools did not have to do this kind of planning. Right now the big pressure is resources. I think there's a readiness on the part of some schools to look at themselves—where their strengths are, how they can build on them, and how they can try to minimize weaknesses."

Andrew Henderson, District 23 Consultant, comments on the difference between *process* and *product* in local school-based planning:

"What they're doing at I.S. 55—Ocean Hill—is very exciting. They've given kids a certain kind of responsibility with a support system. The students have taken on a whole different attitude and a different kind of behavior."

"I think there is a definite process, but I think sometimes people get frightened about that because they can't identify specific things converted into *products*."

"We can begin to see some conversion from process to some very tangible things: how people relate to each other, what kind of climate is necessary for people to function—students, teachers, parents, the community."

Dr. Henderson reflects on principals in the Project:

"I sit in on the District Principals Conference, so I get to see other principals who are not in the Project. The eight principals that are in the Project have a sense of, 'Hey, I can pull those things together,' whereas before, they'd been so separate."

"Believe me, there's been some change. It's a new attitude—a belief that they *can* change. And I think that's a really big thing."

"Believe me, there's been some change. It's a new attitude—a belief that they *can* change. And I think that's a really big thing." *Dr. Andrew Henderson*

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Director, Education Program
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Ernie Turner
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Richard J. Halverson
Deputy Chancellor
Dr. Thomas Minter
Deputy Chancellor for Instruction
Askia Davis
Co-Manager

The Education Program of the New York Urban Coalition provides a wide range of services to support the development of public schools. These services include consulting, training, advocacy, applied research and the extension of successful practices throughout the school system. The Program is particularly concerned with making the best use of the city's many resources for children and their schools.

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Community School District 12
Dr. J. Jerome Harris
Community School District 13
Dr. Carlos Edwards
Community School District 23
Dr. Arnold Raisner
Community School District 28

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District Coordinator
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Rosie Carvin
Office and Grants Administrator
Marie Cesarini
Educational Consultant
Nancy Correa
District Consultant
District 12
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District 4
Bernard Diamond
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New York City Council on Local School Development
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Ford Foundation
New York Foundation
Rockefeller Brothers Fund
New York State Division for Youth
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
Comprehensive Employment Training Act

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New York Community Trust

Community School District 4 (Manhattan)

P-101
Philip Strell

P-108
David Cutie

Bil. P-108
Evelyn Castro

EHBS P-108
Harvey Newman

CLC P-171
Becky Smith

J-99
Eddie Rodriguez

J-117
John Falco

CA-117
Nellie Jordan

Community School District 12 (Bronx)

C.S. 234
Carmen N. Ortiz

C.S. 44
Susan Bailey

C.S. 61
Sherman Tufel

C.S. 66
Loidis Cordero

C.S. 211
Miguel Silen

I.S. 158
Charles Dunn

J-136
Richard Moss

Alternative School
Angel Ramos

Community School District 13 (Brooklyn)

P-67
David Samuels

P-282
Ozelious Clement

P-307
Fannie Porter

P-9
Gerald Kornblum

P-20
Richard Alexander

P-46
Barry Finkelman

J-265
Philip Cox

J-294
Lloyd Watson

Community School District 23 (Brooklyn)

P-137
Virginia Benders

P-178
Herbert Baldwin

P-284
Julia Washington

P-327
Margaret Williams

P-332
Antonio Amato

I.S. 55
Percy W. Jenkins

J-263
Gilbert Grossman

I.S. 271
Gregory D. Coleman

Reading scores:
Percentage at or above grade level

Community School District 28 (Queens)

J-72
Sol Turk

P-30
Ursula Day

P-80
Mary Gibbons

		79	80	81
District #4 (Manhattan)				
PS	101	18.4	34.1	38.2
PS	108	33.8	42.9	41.1
Schomberg	108	4.3	17.1	21.4
EHBS	108	5.5	8.1	27.8
CLC	171	39.4	28.2	50.8
J	117	14.7	20.4	15.8
CA	117		25.8	45.0
J	99	11.0	14.3	21.4
District #12 (Bronx)				
PS	44	33.5	33.5	48.1
PS	61	31.8	40.9	54.6
PS	66	16.9	20.8	32.7
PS	211	18.8	20.1	32.5
PS	234	34.1	51.6	58.1
J	136	19.7	31.5	12.0
IS	158	25.7	21.2	42.8
District #13 (Brooklyn)				
PS	9	31.0	46.2	48.5
PS	20	41.4	52.7	
PS	46	25.9	42.3	48.3
PS	67	26.2	41.5	42.4
PS	282	25.8	35.2	31.9
PS	307	30.9	41.4	47.6
J	265	24.3	34.0	42.3
J	294	24.6	27.1	30.4

District #23 (Brooklyn)				
PS	332	11.4	18.9	26.2
PS	327	30.5	46.9	49.5
PS	284	17.2	22.3	25.8
PS	178	15.0	31.8	30.6
PS	137	23.3	41.4	38.7
IS	55	13.7	17.8	15.9
IS	271	23.0	29.5	35.1
J	263	21.9	32.5	42.3
District #28 (Queens)				
PS	80	40.0	48.3	53.6
PS	30	37.5	44.7	51.2
J	72	34.2	35.2	43.3

The reading scores in Project schools have improved during the past two years, as these unofficial figures reveal. While there are indications in the schools that the Project has influenced many of their educational programs, we cannot yet attribute the rise in scores directly to the Project.

Design Donovan and Green, Inc.
Major photography Barbara Hadley
Other photography Richard A. Lacey
Text Richard A. Lacey